

Trends

THE S.F. FASHION CHEERLEADER ORG CHART

By Lorraine Saunders

It's become easier and easier to get involved in the fashion industry without skipping town for New York or L.A. But it's gotten harder to keep the numerous players straight, thanks to the arrival during the past 10 months of four notable newcomers to the space, the fizzling of other groups and a growing array of events, projects and initiatives from existing groups. Below, we sort the overlapping local fashion landscape with a look at eight key entities and a handful of others.

WHO	WHAT	CLAIM TO FAME	COMI
FashionSF Combined effort from the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development's Elynn Parker, the key city liaison assigned to the project, and a local fashion industry working group co-chaired by Roger Kase of Isola & Co. and Janet Lees of SFMade.	Announced by Mayor Ed Lee, right, in October, this economic development initiative seeks to revive the local fashion industry. Outreach to local manufacturers dominates the current agenda; designers are next.	The backing of Lee; prominent working group members Diane Green and Amy Williams; Weston Wear's Julieanne Weston; Talisman's Tony Pastala; Nice Collective's Ina Harnula; PeopleWearSF's Gill Baugh.	A committee to review the new and with local design details an...
Ahead of the Fashion (AF) www.aheadoffashion.com Co-founders: Enrico Beltrami, Sonja Markov, Randy Williams.	 An accelerator program for technology startups with a fashion focus founded in September in partnership with the Kinkou Forum angel investor network and Nasuni Capital, the program plans to bring on its first participants this summer. Fashion startups and emerging designers (including Christopher Collins, right) pitch ideas or lines before judge panels that have included Gyrobox founder Joan Barnes and former Smith & Hawken chief exec, Barry Gilbert. After time in the hot seat and a fashion show, winners are announced.	Kicking off its inaugural event with former Mayor Willie Brown, and a guest appearance in March by Mayor Ed Lee.	AF has an event Tuesday check website for future events.
San Francisco Fashion & Merchants Alliance (SFFAMA) Owen Geronimo, right, chief executive officer, and Robert Nixon, chief financial officer.	 Founded in 2009, this industry group offers a dizzying volume of events and an ever-increasing stable of online and social media pages. Whatever platform you're on, you can bet they're on it too (and probably for your new blog among their stable of 85-plus URLs). The org is seeking nonprofit status and puts together an annual fashion week, fashion presentations and runway shows, styling competitions, portfolio nights, panel discussions and is the group behind Fashion + Tech SF series.	Along with holding more events per annum than seems humanly possible, the alliance possesses both the trademark to San Francisco Fashion Week and a willingness to use cease-and-desist letters to remind those who may have "forgotten" this fact.	More events: San Francisco Fashion Week planned for September at the Francisco Maritime Center of Craft and Design's new Design District location.
Fashion + Tech SF (FTSF) fashiontechsf.com, SFFAMA (see above)	 Began in 2009 under the name Fashion Mashup, this recently renamed monthly event series tries to connect the fashion and technology industries through panel discussions, demos and networking ops.	Last fall, Geronimo and Nixon changed the name to one that's a simple word-morphing away from that of another fashion-meets-tech player listed here. This was no mere coincidence: A New York chapter held its first meet-up this year during New York Fashion Week.	Has a partners with crowd-funding platform Indiegogo to promote fashion projects by helping entrepreneurs seeking the dough to make their idea happen.
SF Fashion + Tech (SFFT) www.sffashionandtech.com Charles Belle and Mika Uehara, co-founders.	 Coming out of the gate last fall with an event featuring Google, ModCloth and others talking fashion and technology (above), the company has since built out its blog, begun a biweekly newsletter, added monthly networking parties and begun holding meet-ups.	The abrupt evacuation of its inaugural event from RockeetSpace because of a SoMa gas leak scare got buzz at the time; now it's finding ever-larger spaces to house its FW "first Wednesdays" mixers, thanks to an ever-increasing host count of programmers, attractive style bloggers, startup CEOs and fashion company creatives.	More workshops, speaker series and mixers are on the horizon. Uehara is also adding resources and new technology to the website with content director Amanda Elyson (San Francisco Fashion Film Festival co-founder).
Fashion Incubator SF www.fashionincubatorsf.org Executive Director Jeanne Allen, right, co-founder of local 1980s fashion darling Jeanne-Marc, is at the helm, with an advisory board of Macy's execs and city officials. Designers Tamara Jatic, Sabah Husain, Tony Sananikone, Paloma Von Brodsky, Austin Jamison and Bethany Meuleners were selected for program's first year.	 A nonprofit program housed at Macy's Union Square, the incubator provides professional development training, business classes and networking opportunities to six designers for 12 months with the goal of helping participants establish and sustain viable businesses. Applications for the next round of designers-in-residence will be accepted late this year.	An expensive home base that allows residents private offices, as well as a "Project Runway"-esque workspace stocked with cutting tables, sewing machines and all the necessary accoutrements.	2013 collection from resident designer later this year.
SFMade www.sfmade.org Guided by Executive Director Kate Sofis and Janet Lees, senior director.	 Since its 2010 debut, this nonprofit has championed local manufacturing as a way to bolster economic growth and innovation. Hardly limited to fashion, member companies span every sector, from food to furniture. Along with workshops and educational events for local companies, the group's varied offerings include open-to-the-public factory tours, industrial real estate services and an accelerator program for companies seeking to grow operations locally.	Diverse roster of members from the fashion, beauty and accessories areas, including Christopher Collins, Benny Gold, Dena Grimm, Jin Wang, DODCase, Alice Roche and many others.	SFMade Week's last day is Sunday; the group also holds interim events that promote the city's manufacturing sector and cosmetics.
San Francisco Bay Area Fashion Network (SFBAFN) www.sfbfn.com Joseph Domingue (top right), founder.	 A trade association best known for its annual Snow winter fashion show, at which designers present all-white collections and audiences adhere to a strict dress code limited to that hue, the group headed by designer Domingo supports those in the fashion industry through runway events and networking opportunities. While still intact, the group has been relatively quiet since its January show.	Really, really long acronym, managing to get a sizable number of San Franciscans to adhere to a dress code.	The San Francisco International Fashion Film Festival, slated for summer. Not to be confused with the recent San Francisco Fashion Film Festival.

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MORE FASHION PROMOTERS, PAST AND PRESENT

- Innovative Fashion Council:** A nonprofit organization "created in the Office of Mayor Gavin Newsom" to increase exposure for the city's fashion industry. Yetunde Schummann's organization once counted local notables Wilkes Bashford, Claudia Ross and Sonya Molodetskaya on its board.
- Last known communique:** A Facebook page most recently populated by spam comments from 2009. www.ifcst.com.
- Fashion Group International San Francisco:** Currently on hiatus, the local chapter of the New York group was known for organizing networking events and fundraisers. Though activity waned considerably in the past year, a November auction was held to benefit Academy of Art University fashion design students.
- Last known communique:** A Jan. 2 e-mail from Valeria Balini Florio letting members know that "my tenure as Regional Director ended in Dec. 2011 and there was no one to step up to that role." Jill Ambrose is the interim contact for the organization. sanfranciscochicists.org.
- Global Action Through Fashion:** A nonprofit organization set up by Domenica Peterson and Grant Ennis to advance ethical and sustainable fashion through networking and educational events, the group held events featuring speakers and designers from the Bay Area's eco-fashion landscape.
- Last known communique:** A blog post from October 2011. globalactionthroughfashion.org.
- Active:** Digitally Chic, Style Collective and SF Style Council, though newer or less formal than the eight included in "The S.F. fashion cheerleader org chart," provide yet more avenues for connecting with the fashion scene in San Francisco. You can find each on Facebook.

— Lorraine Saunders



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